activities in small farm economy. The plots so designated are devoted, respectively, to cattle-grazing, hay, tillage crops for human and animal consumption, and turf for fuel, and rough summer grazing. Nearer the house is the farmyard or "haggard," in which the hayrick and turfrick are and other supplies, such as potatoes stored in straw bins, stand ready for household and farm use.

The house opens directly into the haggard. There are the cabins, in which the cattle are housed, and the various sheds and stalls, often built out of the dry masonry of the house itself, in which the farm machines, traps, sidecars, carts, and other vehicles are kept. Hens and other poultry roam at will through the haggard and are fed and housed there, and in one of the sheds the pig or pigs find their quarters. As for the house itself, which gives orientation to the haggard and is responsible for the spatial arrangements in it, we shall have occasion to discuss it somewhat later.

Figure 8 gives a schematic view of the kind of farm called "all-purpose land" by the Irish Land Commission. This view is a composite and represents no single farm, but it is taken from direct observation of many in Clare. It depicts a mountain farm in which bog land is included. Otherwise it would do for any area.

Figure 9 gives a schematic view of a house and haggard also in Clare. This is modeled after a house in which one of the authors spent considerable time as a guest, and is carefully and faithfully depicted. But it serves, too, as a general plan for all such houses of small farmers.

The daily activity of the farm family and the daily work which its members carry on center round the house and haggard. Even for the men, whose primary work lies in the fields, gardens, and meadows, work centers in and round the house for a good part of the year. A short sketch of the daily activity which may be observed in any peasant farmhouse will throw into relief the work done by the various

[text continues on p. 35]

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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members and the organization of effort involved. It is to be expected, of course, that there is a great deal of variation at different seasons of the year, a fact which makes it impossible to describe farm activities without reference to seasonal change and the requirements of various crops. Nevertheless, the work round the house is constant and less variant than that outside on the "land," and for that reason it is significant to begin with it.

A typical winter day begins for the farm family about seven-thirty in the morning. At other seasons the family rises earlier, but the long wet days have reduced outside work to a bare minimum and confine the work of the family members within doors. To the woman falls the first duty of the day. She must rake together such live ashes as remain in the slaked turf fire in the hearth, put down new sods for the fire, and rekindle the blaze. This done, she hangs the kettle on the hook, making ready for the first tea of the day. For the rest of the day she must keep the hanging kettle ready, for at any moment of the day she may be called upon to serve a cup of tea to her husband, children, and all visitors. With the first tea comes breakfast, usually of bread, eggs, and milk. By the time breakfast is finished, the household is ready for its workaday existence. The farmer father and husband is dressed and ready for his daily tasks, in which he relies upon the aid of whatever grown sons may still be at home, and who now take their breakfasts beside him. Similarly, the farm wife and mother who serves her men, husband and sons, and stands by unwilling to take her place at the deal table before the window at one side of the kitchen hearth until they have eaten their fill, is ready to begin her daily round with the help of the daughters and young children of both sexes who wait their turns with her.

In the household the responsibility of day-to-day housekeeping belongs to the woman. Hers, too, is the care of the

children. If they are of school age, she must dress them, feed them, and get them off to school. She does all the cooking and washing up after meals and keeps the teapot always ready. Each morning she sweeps the house, makes the beds, and so on. The clothes of the household are her care as well, and the indispensable and constant mending of them which rough wear makes necessary all falls to her lot.

This household work is familiar to us; the point of itemizing it is merely to make clear the confined sphere in which the woman's recurrent and indispensable duties fall.

But her work stretches beyond the house door. In the morning after breakfast she takes the milk buckets and milks the cows in the sheds in the haggard. This is merely one of the many trips she makes in and out of the kitchen doors for fuel, for water, to feed and tend the animals and the fowl. Her milking finished, she must bring the milk in and separate it. In recent years, more prosperous farms have been able to make use of the separator. If there is none, she must set the milk in large pans and allow the cream to rise. The whole process of the conversion of milk to butter is her charge.

After the morning milking and the feeding of her human charges, she must turn her attention to the feeding of the farm animals, especially the young ones. The cows and horses are not her province, but all the care of the calves, pigs, and fowl falls to her lot. She prepares a mixture of warm milk and grain for the calves, feeding them from a bucket. They must not be allowed to suck, as the milk is meant for human consumption. Then she boils a large kettle of potatoes over the fire for the chickens and the pigs, or takes them the leavings of the previous day.

Before noon she hangs another kettle over the fire filled with potatoes for the use of the family. In season she adds white cabbage and nearly always includes a portion or two of bacon, some of it home cured in brine to resemble salt

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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512 462 pork. By the time this is ready, the men are in from the fields impatient for their dinner.

In the meantime the men have been engaged upon work of their own. The farmer rises when he hears his wife busy herself in rekindling the turf on the hearth. If there are sons, he wakes them. After that he goes to the cow barns in the haggard to inspect the cattle housed there overnight and tend to their wants in water and hay. After breakfast, if the day is fine, neither too bitterly cold nor too soakingly wet, he sallies forth into the fields to whatever work the time of the year demands. If he finds himself confined to the house, he still has plenty to do in house and haggard.

512 462 264 [153] If he and his sons go to the fields, he probably returns about eleven-thirty for the noon meal, the heavy meal of the day. Long habit calls forth his hunger and identifies it with the house. Several countrymen have remarked that they never feel hungry away from the house but are ready to eat when they get inside. The dinner unites most of the family for the first time during the day since breakfast. Only the small children of school age are absent. Their share of the meal is often saved for them until they return about four o'clock.

[262] [521] As at breakfast, the men sit down together immediately, falling to the steaming plates of cabbage, bacon, and potatoes the woman sets before them. As they eat, she stands ready to refill their plates, talking with them about the morning's work and the news of the neighborhood. It is the chief time of family conversation. During the meal the woman has boiled tea and, when the men finish with their plates, she clears away and lays bread and tea before them. Sometimes there is a longer interval between tea and dinner, devoted to smoking and talk.

512 264 [273] As before, the women and children do not eat until the men have finished. They take their places together when the men have left or have moved off to smoke an after-dinner pipe, an indispensable part of the meal for them.

512 264 [521 858] dinner pipe, an indispensable part of the meal for them. The children may sometimes not come to the table but eat sitting upon the settle or the hearth seats. They are very silent children. They take little part in the family discussion between older members unless questioned directly.

512 462 231 After dinner the men return to their work. The women begin their household and farmyard tasks anew. The fowl have grown so hungry, meanwhile, that they are invading the kitchen and the woman must "hunt" them out of the house. From what remains of the pot of potatoes (which may often hold as much as forty pounds) she feeds them and feeds, too, the household pets. They eat what the family eats, though meat comes their way only upon special occasions.

This done, the woman's chores for the afternoon are much the same as those of the morning. Another large pot of potatoes, mangels, and turnips must be prepared for the pigs, more milk and grain mixed and fed to the calves, turf brought in for the fire, water fetched from the well, and rooms cleaned and swept, in an endless cycle of activity. Should the routine duties come to a pause, there is still always plenty to do in washing, mending, and knitting the clothes of the household. The woman's hands are never idle.

512 462 252 354 There is another important daily activity within the house. The great staple, bread, is baked daily into round cakes or loaves upon the "griddle," an iron tripod, on the hearth. The woman may bake at any time during the day and, if necessary, more than once. Even late in the evening, when the whole family is gathered round the fire, her last task may be to bake bread for late evening tea.

512 462 [521 203 858] After four in the "evening" (as the countryman divides the day), the children arrive from school and must be fed. The woman sits down with them, talking over the happenings of the day, for children are important purveyors of News.

news. An hour or so later the man brings the cattle in from the fields, if they have been grazing during the day. He is ready for evening tea.

At that hour the work of the men is over for the day, but that of the woman goes on. She must prepare, serve, and clean up after the tea, and then go milk the cows brought in from the fields. Her work ends only with the separating that takes place when she brings her milk into the house. Even then, while the men may sit round the fire talking over the day's work or the affairs of the community, she is not idle. If the children need help in lessons, it is she who gives it to them. She puts them to bed, and, if she returns then to join the men at the fire, she continues with knitting and baking. When the whole family has finally gone off to bed, it is she who must close up the house at night and slake the fire in the hearth.

Work round and inside the house is continuous and varies very little from day to day and season to season. It involves a continuous activity by which the household group orders its life and fulfills its needs of nourishment and shelter in the midst of a carefully patterned regularity of habitual behaviors. What variation there is in the accepted pattern is itself confined to narrow range. Certain chores indispensable in the day-to-day habits of the people are divided among days of the week. One woman informant, a small farmer's wife in Inagh, gave as her weekly round a much more rigid daily division of tasks than is actually to be observed. On Monday she did the washing, on Tuesday the ironing, on Thursday she made butter, on Friday she went to market, on Saturday she got ready for Sunday, and on Sunday she went to mass and did as little as she could. Really, however, it is only on Sunday that there comes any serious alteration in the daily round.

Work in the land beyond the haggard and the house is less restricted and more varied. It has a greater range of

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512 activity over the farm and over the round of the year. Coupled with such greater variety, there is also a greater freedom of choice among necessary tasks. The necessities imposed by soil and climate permit a wider range of action and a less narrowly repetitious routine than do the ordered regularities of a household.

512 221 Yet within the greater range of activity there is still a constant and nearly invariant pattern of work. The progression of the seasons brings a recurrent demand upon the farmer in the care of beasts, crops, and the land itself. Each season brings a task which must be performed, begun, or ended if the farmer is to raise his produce successfully. 512 626 Similarly, the custom and rivalry of the community exert a further restriction upon his activity. He works within the influence of a long-established tradition of ancestral experience which has established for him the best dates for planting, for reaping, for breeding cattle, and for most of the tasks of his yearly round. The community holds that tradition in common, and the farmer is caught in the midst of a mesh of rivalries, competitions, and gossip in praise and condemnation, which binds him the more strongly to the accepted patterning of his yearly activity.

512 221 462 The seasonal rhythm of farm work reaches its lowest pitch in winter. Activity is confined to house and haggard. On bitter wet days little can be done beyond the haggard wall, but within it there is always a variety of necessary tasks involving care of farm machinery, implements, and buildings, and the housing and feeding of the cattle who cannot be driven to graze in the open field. In the house there is much that can be done. Harness can be patched, boots fitted with new soles, plates, and spikes, furniture repaired and occasionally new pieces made.

These tasks fall to the males of the household, the farmer father and his grown or adolescent sons. Any discussion of the annual round of farm work necessarily describes their

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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labors, for all the tasks not strictly connected with the household fall in their province. We shall have occasion later to examine fully the sexual dichotomy of labor such a division of tasks represents.

For the countryman the Christmas season, from the beginning of Advent to Epiphany or "Little Christmas" (January 6), is the dead of winter. It is a period in which all farm work is at a standstill. The farmer has completed the last of his harvest and brought in the last of his potatoes from the field. The cattle are securely housed against the winter cold. The farmer feels himself free to sit round the house during the cold wet days and devote his season to holiday. The working day is at its shortest. Outside, the weather is usually unsettled, a cold rain falling on the sodden fields. It is for him as though the course of the year had stopped and were waiting, gathering its forces for the new year.

It is a period of great social activity in the local community. The very important religious ceremonies of the season call forth an intensified activity in the parish. There are constant visits back and forth; each house is ready to offer its hospitality to its neighbors; and the community gives itself over to dances, cards, talk, and calls. Not until the religious season closes with Epiphany does the countryman feel that the year begins anew.

With the beginning of the year, the cold uncertain weather with its succession of bitter wet days, leaving the fields too wet to work, does not end, but the Christmas season has marked the transition. The farmer must now make his plans for the spring planting, lay in his seed, repair machinery, and make ready for the season about to begin. On drier days he can busy himself in the field in cleaning ditches and drainages. In the evenings much of the conversation on visits and at home revolves round the coming planting. and both new and traditional experience with

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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Following the countryman at his work, we can learn what his role is, what determines it, and what keeps him to it; we can see its controls and the organization of labour it entails.

The first duty of the farm family's day falls to 'the woman of the house'. Before the others are up, she rakes together such live ashes as remain in the slaked turf fire, puts down new sods, and rekindles the blaze. Then she hangs the kettle on the hook over the hearth, making ready for the first tea of the day. All day long the kettle will hang there, for at any moment she must be ready to serve a cup of tea to husband, children and visitors. With the first tea comes breakfast: bread, eggs and milk.

By the time breakfast is over, the household is ready for its workaday life. The men are up and dressed for the day's tasks, and the farm wife and mother who serves them and stands by unwilling to sit down till they have had their fill, has begun her daily round. She takes her place later with her daughters and young children who help her throughout the day.

But familiar housework is not the whole of the woman's duty. Her work takes her beyond the house door. After breakfast she takes the milk buckets and goes to milk the cows in the sheds. This is merely one of many trips she makes out into the haggard, for fuel, for water, and to feed the animals and poultry. Milking over, she must not rest, for the whole process of converting milk

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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462 to butter is her charge. She is an expert at the
512 churn.

Her human charges fed, she must feed the animals in their turn. The full-grown cattle and the horse are not her charge, but she must tend calves and pigs and fowl. Milk and potatoes must be prepared for them all.

Before noon, she hangs a second kettle from the hook. This time she fills it with potatoes for the [262] family. In season, she will add white cabbage, and a portion or two of bacon or salt pork. By the time this is ready the men will be in from the fields impatient for their dinner.

For the men have not been idle. The farmer-father and husband wakes his sons, inspects the cattle and horse, if there is one, and gives them hay and water. If the day is fine, he sallies forth to the fields; if not, and the weather confines him to house and haggard, he has still plenty to do, in building walls, repairing and making machine parts, harness and tools.

Dinner unites the family for the first time since breakfast. Only children of school age are absent and their share of the meal is saved till later. As before, the women and children do not eat till the men have finished. But as the women serve, they [521] all talk about the experiences of the day. It is the chief time of general family conversation. Only the [858] children are silent, for in rural Ireland a well-behaved child is a silent one.

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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After dinner, work begins anew. For the women chores are much the same as in the morning. Should routine duties come to a pause, there is still plenty to do. Washing, mending, knitting must be done; and their hands are never idle.

The great staple, bread, is baked daily, upon the 'griddle' at the hearth. The women may bake at any time, and even late in the evening when the family is gathered round the fire, their last task may be to bake for supper of bread and tea.

At four in the 'evening', as the countryman divides the day, children arrive from school, to be fed and questioned. For they are important purveyors of news. Later, the men are home from the fields, driving the cattle home, bedding them for the night. The woman must serve supper and milk the cows, bringing the milk in to separate. But though her day is over with the separating, she may not sit idly with the men for long beside the evening's fire. Children, knitting, and baking can still be attended to; tradition and proverb demand that 'one woman in the house be always working'.

Work round house and haggard is continuous; it varies little from season to season. It involves a continuous activity by which the household group orders its life and fulfils its first needs in the midst of a carefully patterned regularity of habit. What variation there is, is itself confined to a narrow range. Certain chores are divided among days of the week, but they show nothing of the swift change

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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462 of a Solomon Grundy. A farmer's wife of Clare
512 divided her week more rigidly in describing it than she did in practice. "On Monday", she said, "I do the washing, on Tuesday the ironing, on Thursday I make butter, on Friday to market, on Saturday I get ready for Sunday, and on Sunday I go to mass and do as little as I can." Really it is only on Sunday that any change seriously alters the daily round; for the country-people are strict sabbatarians, at least regarding work.

241 Work on the 'land' beyond the haggard and the
462 house is less restricted. It has a greater range over
221 the farm and offers a wider variety of tasks round the year. There is a wider freedom of choice among tasks as well. Soil and climate are just as insistent as is the household, but they do not force such narrow regularities.

Yet each season brings a task the farmer must perform. Custom and rivalry in the community restrict him as well. He is in fact less free to choose the date of sowing than his wife the hour of dinner. Long-established tradition and ancestral experience imprint upon his mind the best dates for planting, for reaping, for harrowing, for breeding cattle, and so forth. The farmer is caught, willingly of course, in a mesh of rivalries, competitions, condemnations, which binds him the more strongly to the community's patterning of his yearly round.

The seasonal rhythm of farm work reaches its low in winter. On bitter wet days little can be done

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

is concluded. The burial grounds are kept much better than in many other parts of the West; and on Inishkea, as well as in the Mullet, it it is customary to decorate the graves with large white pebbles, and to place at the head a neatly made wooden cross. A curious custom exists, some instances of which were observed at Tarmoncarra, of placing tobacco pipes on the graves; these are the pipes which were left unused after the wake. What the reason is for so placing them could not be ascertained, but it is considered extremely unlucky to remove them.

Unbaptised infants are interred in separate burying grounds by themselves, several of which are in the district.

It is now no longer customary for the people of the Mullet to bury their dead in Inisglora, the last instance of this having occured over thirty years ago. Formerly many families used regularly to make use of this island as a cemetery, always taking a body over from a point of the mainland opposite, which was stated by tradition to have once been connected with the main, but to have got separated afterwards by a channel which has gradually widened.

Maxwell,[1] writing in 1832, says—"There are no people on earth more punctilious in the interment of their dead than the peasantry of this remote district. A strange and unaccountable custom exists of burying different families resident on the main in island cemeteries, and great difficulty and often great danger attends the conveyance of a corpse to its insulated resting place. No inducement will make these wild people inter a body apart from the tomb of its fathers, and, if a boat will live, the corpse will be transported to the family tomb. At times the weather renders this impracticable, but the deceased is kept for many days unburied in the hope that the storm may subside; and only when frail mortality evinces unequivocal tokens of decay will the relatives consent to unite its dust with the ashes of a stranger."

A considerable number of migratory labourers leave this district annually to do harvesting work in England, on the proceeds of which work they in part support themselves during the winter. The number doing thus has decreased somewhat of late years.

There is not much to be said about the everyday mode of life. The men fish and attend to their holdings; the women manage household affairs and assist at field work in times of pressure. The people are early risers in the summer months, and, as a rule, retire to bed early, few lights being seen in the hamlets after nine or ten p.m.

[1] Maxwell, W. H., "Wild sports of the West," chap. XIX.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

and a handful of thatch taken from above the door of his house. 234
Butter-making must have been a chancy and critical business 789
when each family had only one or two cows, ill-fed for a large
part of the year, and there were fairies, witches and blinkers to
contend with. The protective charms and prognostications
connected with churning are legion. If you should enter an
old-style mountain kitchen when churning is in progress you
may well be invited to lend a hand, or at least to 'leave your
weight on the staff,' just to show that your intentions are not
evil. There must be no bad words during churning, no quarrels,
no singing or drinking: to drink anything is presumably to
dilute the milk. If the milk splashes the churner is fated to
marry a drunken mate. When the butter at last breaks a small
ball of it is traditionally taken and smeared on the wall or tossed
on top of the dresser to bring luck to the house, perhaps
originally as an offering to the fairies. And when the churning
is finished the staff should be twisted round three times and
placed across the mouth of the churn. There are many other
precautions that may be taken: a horseshoe—preferably 'a shoe
of one heating'—tied to the churn or nailed to the bottom; a
nail from a horseshoe or from a coffin driven into churn or
staff; a ring of salt placed on the lid; a twig of rowan tied round
the churn. Or the plough coulter should be heated in the fire,
and the churnstaff tied with a straw rope to the fire-crane: if
the staff is made of rowan-wood so much the better. If despite
all precautions the butter does not come there are ways of
catching the thief. For instance, a cake is baked and stuck with
pins and a bunch of yarrow placed in the churn. The thief will
come crying to the door in pain, and he must not be allowed in
but turned away.

Special precautions should also be taken to make the house 512 ●
safe at night from unwanted visitations. Before the fire is raked 352
and 'smoored' (buried in peat-ash) a spark should be dropped
into the foot-water, the water in which feet have been washed [515]
and to which many superstitions are attached. The carded flax
should be placed under a weight, the band taken off the spinning
wheel and the quern dismantled. Many stories are told of the
risks involved in letting the fairies have access to these things.
Finally the besom should be placed against the door: the

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

512 352 [777] besom's association with everyday tasks and with the fireside endows it with special power. Thrown after a departing matchmaker or anyone going on an important errand, it brings luck to his mission.

771 789 178 For most people, needless to say, such things are now meaningless superstitions—old pishrogues. True, one still hears occasionally of cows being blinked, of a black cock buried alive as a cure for epilepsy, of a healthy woman pining away because a neighbour was sticking pins into a waxen image. These are stray survivals, doomed to disappear; but in a larger sense the past never wholly dies: it lives on buried in the minds of men and in the landscapes they have fashioned.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

132 only four hours of relative darkness, from midnight on, six months later at mid-
• 512 summer. People tend to sleep late during the winter, sometimes to nine or even
132 ten o'clock, and to begin their social activities early in the evening, while in June and July they arise an hour or two earlier and work as late as ten o'clock at night. My wife and I have attended parties during the 12 days of Christmas when guests assembled before eight o'clock, whereas in July we have waited until almost midnight for festivities to commence, when darkness afforded privacy of movement, desirable for reasons to be explained later. Times for meals, feeding and milking cattle, and many other enterprises also follow the lengthening and shortening of daylight hours from season to season.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

fishing season, will not use up so much time getting to and from the pastures. Other reasons for shifting cows are that the village wells are more dependable than the springs at the back of the island during occassional summer dry spells, and cows when "tormented" by insects can run about the terrace fields more safely than they can the rockier and more fissured indigenous and improved plots above. Milking is done between eight thirty and ten o'clock in the morning and four thirty and six in the afternoon during the winter, and an hour or two later in the summer. When milking, the farmer crouches at the right side of the beast and holds a pail with his left hand while drawing one teat at a time with his right. He murmurs to the cow in Irish to keep it pacified, and is ready to move swiftly should the animal suddenly shift its position.

To encourage cattle breeding, the government subsidizes the construction of reservoirs at the back of the island for collecting rain water, and of barns and outbuildings for storing hay, rye, potatoes, and farming and fishing equipment. The typical reservoir is placed in an area surrounded by actual or potential grazing land located at a considerable distance from the nearest spring. It is composed of a cemented stone platform with a slanting concave surface which drains into a rectangular shaped tank. Barns and outbuildings are small stone structures, usually thatched, which are single roomed and doored and may have one or two small windows. The barns, like the reservoirs, are placed within easy access of fields used for pasturage.

Sheep are reared in Inis Beag to furnish wool, as well as to be sold and slaughtered for local consumption. They demand little care, as they are allowed to graze in undeveloped pastures and to obtain water from rain filled depressions in the pavement and from plants that they devour. Kept by their owners for five or six years and then disposed of, they are sheared once a year between May and July. There are white, brown, and black haired varieties, and between six and eight pounds of wool can be procured from an animal every shearing. If a householder possesses a large herd, he may choose to sell some of his lambs when they are six months old, and in August many lambs are shipped from Inis Beag on the steamer. Although some folk from time to time slaughter their own sheep to provide meat for the tables, several householders maintain large herds and specialize in selling lamb and mutton to visitors and fellow islanders.

All Inis Beag homes have at least one dog and most of them have a cat. These animals perform certain services and act as pets. At the time walls were low at the back of the island, dogs were employed to round up sheep, and they also aided their owners hunt rabbits along the rock piled shore of the west sound, when the meat of this animal was eaten more commonly than it is today. Now, their duties are restricted to warning of the approach of strangers and chasing chickens out of the kitchen. Cats are kept to catch mice, and their presence on the premises is sufficient to keep rats from approaching the house and outbuildings. They are treated less well than dogs, but both dogs and cats are given little affection and often are not fed enough. It is true that some islanders are strongly attached to their pets and provide them with adequate care, but they are the exceptions. A man devoted to his dog will be followed about the island by the animal, and a desired trait in a dog is that it will not show interest in persons outside of the

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

361 It is apparent from the size of these settlements that some such term as hamlet might be more appropriate than village, but I have chosen to follow island usage. Within each village, no house is further than 50 yards from its nearest neighbor, some even sharing the same gable, and a myriad of paths serve to link single and grouped dwellings with a main road.

184 Although the traditions of Inis Beag and islands in its vicinity can be designated as a subculture of the Irish system taken as a whole, nevertheless there are marked differences in custom between them. One might suppose that cultural variation would be slight in an island as small and stable as Inis Beag, but [829] the remarkable fact is that there are differences among the four villages. The folk [628] are well aware of inter-village, inter-island, and island-mainland cultural variability, and they also possess a well defined image of their own way of life. At this point, I would like to examine the attitudes of the people toward their own communities, Inis Thiar, the mainland, themselves, and outsiders who visit or live among them.

829 High and Castle Villages attract the fewest opinions. The inhabitants of 628 the former are accused of arriving late at island affairs, especially to mass in the 184 chapel so close at hand, and dwellers in the latter of keeping ferocious dogs which [231] bark at night and molest visitors. Until recently, each Castle household had from two to four dogs, and it was possible for those living in Low to know when a visitor making a night visit had arrived in Castle by the outcry of the animals. • [512] Castle people, like those in Terrace, milk their cows earlier in the day than do [823] other islanders, and since both settlements are located on the upper terraces and command exceptional views of the mainland coast and sea around, the dwellers in each claim that their panorama is the most inspiring.

829 The numerous attitudes toward Low and Terrace Villages mostly reflect 628 their positions in the island and resultant differential acculturation; generally 184 speaking, the local culture becomes more traditional as one moves eastward from 177 Low, the jetty, and the strand. It is often said that Terrace folk "are strangers to 178 the rest of us" and resemble the inhabitants of Inis Thiar, whom many writers and [342] scientists claim are the most traditional of Irish peasants. More cottages are [461] thatched and the indigenous costume is more in evidence in Terrace than elsewhere, and the villagers there are the earliest risers and hardest workers and tend to arrive early for events, in contradistinction to their High neighbors. Families in Terrace are considered more closely knit and cooperative and the people more [275] self-reliant than those in the other communities. The men spend less time in the pubs, do not need drink to "give them courage" to sing and dance, and are livelier and more extroverted at parties. Not only do Terrace folk believe that their village is best located as to beauty of land and seascape, but they claim that it is quieter [241] and the air is healthier there than elsewhere in Inis Beag. Another Terrace custom often cited is that of farmers using all four types of seaweed as fertilizers and setting their gardens in the same manner; farmers in the other settlements use [421] only two or three kinds of seaweed and set their gardens in a variety of ways. Lastly, the practice of seeking wrack is most prevalent among Terrace men. The freighter ran aground near Terrace, and the men there were said to have acquired more salvage than other islanders as a result of their being close to the ship and

16:Meaasenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

inveterate wrack-boomers. The separateness of Terrace villagers was made most apparent at the time of the shipwreck through the aggression, both overt and covert, directed against them by their fellows.

The behavior of Low villagers, on the other hand, is often the opposite of that of Terrace people less than a mile away; for instance, the folk of Low are the latest risers and milkers, the least industrious, and the most prone to spend time in the pubs. They claim to be descendants of the earliest immigrants in the seventeenth century and are the most boastful of family genealogies. However, most of the landless householders live in Low and as such are held in low repute by landed villagers. People here are the most receptive to tourists, and the two pubs which attract outsiders and the several private homes in which tourists may lodge all are located in Low. It is said that Terrace folk do not need and are indifferent to tourists, whereas Low villagers could not survive without them, either economically or psychologically. Although islanders today visit nearby islands and the mainland less than did their forebears at the turn of the century, the people of Low are considered the most traveled, past and present, of the local population.

As for attitudes directed outward, most islanders regard the culture of Inis Thiar as more traditional than their own. Often heard is the assertion that 70 years ago the inhabitants of the two islands were almost alike as to behavior and beliefs, but the coming of lighthouse and coast guard families, and a permanent curate after 1919, to Inis Beag introduced successive changes which gradually widened the cultural gap between the two. Another factor of importance hindering acculturation in Inis Thiar has been its lack of good landing facilities for visitors to come ashore; the steamer must stand off the jetty of Inis Thiar in the unprotected and often turbulent sound and be met by canoes, whereas it can approach closely the strand of Inis Beag, between the jetty and a point of land, where under most weather conditions it is relatively calm.

Visitors to Inis Beag also hold the same opinion of the two cultures, and the most often made comparison between the islands is the Irish spoken in them. The people of Inis Beag and Inis Thiar recognize slight differences in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation between the two speech communities, but they seldom rank their respective proficiencies, unless outsiders in one island assert that the Gaelic spoken in the other is "purer." Once a tourist angered visiting Inis Thiar fishermen in my presence by publicly pronouncing that the Irish in Inis Beag is superior, and that he would send his children here to learn Gaelic and then to Inis Thiar to learn English; the tongue-in-cheek statement was prompted by a discussion of the linguistic skills of the publican in the neighboring island, who is called "the English speaker" because of the rapidity of his speech and chronic misuse of esoteric English words. Indigenous nativists are far more numerous and militant in Inis Thiar than in Inis Beag, and the anger of the fishermen reflected pride in their own culture and their belief that it is more traditional than that of Inis Beag.

Inis Thiar folk are thought by their neighbors to the east to be more industrious and extroverted than themselves. They are believed to rise earlier, work longer and more energetically with fewer breaks for contemplation or gossip with

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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> conditions appraised. . . . The community regulates its internal affairs through the *cuard* as well. It is here public opinion is formulated. There is nothing formal about the decisions made upon the incidents arising from day to day. The local community has no implement with which to enforce its will. But it has the power of gossip and . . boycott (Arensberg and Kimball 1940:190–191).

Decisions of this sort and their sanctions in Inis Beag rest largely in the hands of government officials and the priest, headmaster, and king.

Many folk long have believed that the island needs a council with representatives from each of the four villages serving on it, to foster cooperation and to formulate policies which bear on the welfare of all. After independence in 1922, a move was made to form such a council, but the civil war interrupted the process; since that time, according to the islanders, the opposition of curates and king, none of whom have wanted their vested interests threatened, has succeeded in blocking the formation of such a body. Other forces at work, however, are the lassitude and ambivalence toward authority of the people, and their dislike and jealousy of one another. They complain of the lack of leadership, or of the "wrong" kind of leadership, as in the case of the priest and king; but they are unable or unwilling to expend the energy needed to get themselves organized and "pull together" for the common good. Often those who advocate the formation of a council will, in the next breath, express their dislike or distrust of its potential members, or a desire to remain independent of its collective will should it run contrary to their own. A vacationing emigrant who said, "We have no sense of civic pride and responsibility but think only of ourselves.", assessed the situation accurately.

Among the traits attributed to Inis Beag folk by nativists and primitivists are self-reliance, independence, and individualism. But the self-reliance of the islanders has become undermined increasingly since 1891 by a benevolent government; their independence is severely curtailed by restrictions imposed on them by curate, headmaster, king, and their fellows; and their individualism is a figment of literary imagination disguising a strict conformism. Inis Beag as much as any community is characterized by gossip, ridicule, and opprobrium, which gain their effectiveness as social control mechanisms from the deep concern of the folk with "saving face," and which serve to limit freedom of action and behavioral idiosyncracy. When asked to rank the major deficiencies of island life, the people almost without exception place the prevalence of malicious gossiping, along with poverty and the intrusion of the clergy into secular affairs, at the head of their list.

No matter how much the islanders detest gossiping when they are its victims, they nevertheless welcome every opportunity to engage in it. News of an event passes quickly by word of mouth from Low to Terrace Villages, and variations in the description of the event are usually numerous due to the distortions of rumor. In order to circumvent gossip, parties are organized at the last moment and invitations issued by small boys moving quietly from door to door in the night; persons will leave the island—sometimes to emigrate, visit the hospital with a serious illness, or enter an order—without previous announcement, running from their homes to the strand to board the last canoes for the steamer; and mail is posted just prior to the arrival of the steamer and picked up immediately after it

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521 203 591 is carried to the post office, for fear that the postmaster will open letters and talk publicly of their contents (or take money from them). It is customary for boys and young men to hide themselves in the darkness or behind fences in order to overhear conversations of passersby, or witness their misbehavior, which can be reported; this compels folk who move about after dark to conceal their faces and talk in whispers or low tones. When a person hidden in the darkness is accosted suddenly, he will vault a fence, run away, or crouch down and hide his face or draw a raincoat over his head and shoulders to avoid being recognized. Most social events [574] [512] and visiting take place after sundown, so that movements from one house to another will be unobserved.

626 Deviant behavior once learned of assures its perpetrators of becoming the focus of gossip and ridicule. But ridicule seldom is voiced in the presence of the victim; rather, he or she is told of it by relatives and acquaintances who have [633] witnessed or, more commonly, been told of it by others. My ballad not only took [634] advantage of the ubiquity of rumor, but its composition, aided and abetted by two dozen respondents, enabled me to discover the existence of a seldom revealed tradition of satirical balladry, common to the Irish, which has singled out for opprobrium many folk in the past. During three summer visits to Inis Beag following 1960, my wife and I were able to witness the singing of my song publicly. We learned that it, as others of its genre, is sung only before small gatherings, and whether or not it (or certain of its verses) is sung and by whom depends on [123] the makeup of the assembled group. Since ridicule is almost never expressed in the presence of its victim or his kin or close friends, we were able to gain information about kinship relations and factionalism by noting the juxtaposition of balladiers and audiences and which verses were sung.

Courtship and Marriage

582 589 162 Marriages are fewer and are entered into later in Ireland than in any other Western country. In 1951, approximately one-third of the men and one-quarter of the women in Ireland between the ages of 55 and 64 years had never married, while two-thirds of the men and two-fifths of the women between 25 and 34 years of age were single. Celibacy and age of marriage figures for Inis Beag approximate those for the rest of peasant Ireland. In a population of 350 persons, 116 are married; 13 are widows; 3 are widowers; and 33 males over 23 years of age and 21 females over 17 are single. Since marriage occurs between the ages of 24 and 45 years for men and 18 and 32 for women, based on statistics extending back to 1911, only 18 men and 9 women (excluding 3 women who, because of physical disabilities, probably never will marry) are eligible for marriage. Not only are 34.4 percent of the males bachelors and 22.6 percent of the females spinsters, but the average marriage age for men in the period 1951 to 1960 was 35.5 years and for women 24.8 (compared to an average for rural Ireland of 34.7 582 years for men and 28.7 for women in 1946). The age span between spouses married during the past half-century ranges from the husband being 21 years older than his wife to 4 years younger, but the average age span has been between 8 and 12 years for each of the five decades. The number of marriages per decade has been